

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Guillermo Alberto Santiago Lasso
Mendoza of Ecuador**

December 19, 2022

President Biden. Mr. President, in America we call this is "bringing the press in out of the cold."

[At this point, the President briefly addressed reporters as follows.]

Laugh a little bit. That was pretty good. *[Laughter]* You guys have to admit that.

Anyway, I'm glad to see you again after a successful summit we had, the Summit of the Americas, in June, and to be able to return a small amount of hospitality your family showed my wife Jill when she visited Quito over the spring. She enjoyed it so much I wasn't sure she was coming home. *[Laughter]*

Today we're going to keep building on the progress we've made. Together, we've made historic strides on migration. And this afternoon we'll discuss how we can deepen our security and our economic partnership even further than it is right now. That includes our new joint investment programs that address security needs for Ecuador's prison system, your justice sector, and your maritime security.

And, Mr. President, since we both understand that working families are the backbone of both our economies, I look forward to discussing how we can keep delivering for those families under the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity. In both our countries.

And, finally, I want to thank you for your moral leadership, your condemnation of Putin's brutal war against the Ukrainian people that continues in ways we haven't seen for a generation. You and I are united not only in our values, but in our vision of the future, one that's both free and democratic.

And in the new year, as Ecuador begins its term on the U.N. Security Council, I look forward to continuing to work together to make this vision a reality. And I want to thank you very much for making the effort to be here.

And as they used to say in the legislative body I worked, the United States Senate: The floor is yours.

President Lasso. Thank you very much, Mr. President. For me it is also a pleasure to here—to be here with you after our very nice visit together in Los Angeles and also after that very pleasant visit with you and your wife Jill in Quito.

So, with—for us, this is a great opportunity to come here and to reaffirm the democratic freedom and human rights values that we share with the glorious people of the U.S.

Without a doubt, yes, we have been allies for decades now. And I am here to reaffirm that spirit that we share among us as allies, too, in our fight for democracy, for peace, and for justice, not only in the region, but also to support your vision throughout the world.

So we were the first country in Latin America to condemn the awful war from Russia into Ukraine. We believe in multilateralism, and we also believe in the rule of law. And we also support dialogue as the means for solving differences and disputes. It is really remarkable to see that after a pandemic we are now facing a war.

So we will have a chance, after we visit with our friends of the press, to share more on the issues we have in common.

President Biden. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. We have a lot to talk about. You have been a great friend and a significant supporter, and that goes both ways. And we have to figure out how to expand and strengthen even an already strong relationship.

And I want to thank the press for coming in. We're going to send you back out in the cold. [Laughter] The hallway is not much further down, so you'll get warm.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:41 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. President Lasso spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Ecuador, President Lasso.

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